

“The Power of Praise”

2 Chronicles 20:1-25

Introduction

King Jehoshaphat ruled over a nation that was globally affected by a problem: according to 2 Chronicles 20:2, a large army was closing in on Judah and coming to attack God’s people. The predicament of battle caused King Jehoshaphat to fear. The battle presented a problem that he didn’t know how to fix, and it brought him face-to-face with an enemy he didn’t know how to face. However, in the midst of this problem, we are told that he turned his eyes to seek the Lord. He looked up because there was no other solution for solving his problem.

In the midst of COVID-19, many people are talking about God. They are even prioritizing prayer because there is a problem that is bigger than us: the threat of disease and potential death. Apart from the reality of the Coronavirus in our communities and society at large, many continue to be affected by other crises situations that threaten to disrupt and destroy. A crisis is characterized by a set of circumstances that are difficult, or seem to be near to impossible, to escape. Just like quicksand, the harder you work, the deeper into the problem you go. However, in 2 Chronicles 20, we see God’s people giving us a solution for what we can do when we are in a crisis when nothing else seems to be working: King Jehoshaphat declared a national fast, and the people gathered together to seek the Lord. God’s people today should be willing to do the same.

King Jehoshaphat called the nation to seek the God of their fathers, to put God first and position Him correctly within society. He brought the attention of all people – men, women and children – to the fact that their victory depended on their willingness to focus on God and bring His will front and center. When the King prayed, he acknowledged that the people didn’t know what to do (v. 12). None of us like to be in a scenario where we don’t know what to do, but God will allow situations in our lives that we can’t fix on our own in order to draw our attention to how much we need Him.

Just like King Jehoshaphat, when we pray and acknowledge that God is in control even when we are not, we should always start with praise. Rehearsing God’s person and power positions us to more clearly hear what God wants to say. Praise makes a difference. When you magnify God, you acknowledge that God is bigger – bigger than your fears, situations, or problems. Praise shifts the problem you feel you can’t handle over to a God who is big enough to handle it. In 2 Chronicles 20, it was when God heard the praise of His people that He set an ambush for the enemy. During this difficult season that is widespread with discouragement, difficulty and fear for so many, we must engage with God seriously. Put Him first. Prioritize prayer. Be intentional to praise Him for who He is and what He has the power to do in your life.

Getting Started

1. Pastor decided to teach this week from a pulpit to do something that felt “regular” in the midst of this COVID-19 season? What are you doing to continue to experience regular life during this irregular season?
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Let’s Get Personal

1. A crisis is a situation that overwhelms you. It can be health-related, economic, relational, social, or centered around your career. What is the last crisis you recall having to deal with?
2. What do you typically do when you’ve hit a crisis in life and don’t seem to have definitive options available? Do you worry? Stress? Verbally process with a friend? Pray to God for help?

3. One of the best ways to weather a storm of life today is to know how God has made provision during a previous crisis. This is why you need to know God's Word. Our present circumstances are allowing an unprecedented time for many of us to dig deep into the Word on our own. Have you been personally spending time with God? What have you been studying? Share the topics or passages that you have been studying, and also how the Spirit has been convicting you as result.
4. The Bible continuously declares the power and provision of God. What circumstances or situations in the Bible do you recall from this week's sermon that bring you comfort in this current season?

Take the Next Step

1. God's Word is available to us through its written form (*graphe*), living form (*logos*), or personal word (*rhema*). Have you ever experienced God speaking a rhema word into your life? Can you share your experience with your group?
2. Despite our current crisis and whatever your own personal challenges might be, this week's sermon encouraged you to prioritize prayer and praise. Have you been making room for praise as you talk to God? Praise allows you to tell your fears to "look up." How will you intentionally do this in the coming week? Take turns sharing reasons to praise God as you bring this week's group time to a close.
3. Want to go deeper? Take a look at the following passages: 1 Samuel 17:26; 36; Psalm 34; 50:23; and 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. Read 2 Chronicles 20:4-12 on your own to be encouraged by King Jehoshaphat's prayer.

Renew Your Mind

*"Don't be afraid or discouraged by this great army because the battle isn't yours. It belongs to God!"
2 Chronicles 20:15b (CEB)*
